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Civil war threatens Philippines

Opposition to Marcos rises on Hill

By Rita McWilliams
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Congressional opposition to Filipino President Ferdinand Marcos escalated yesterday as the Reagan administration threatened to cut off military aid to the Philippines.

On Capitol Hill, critics of the Marcos regime called not only for an end to the military aid — \$55 million this year — but for the resignation of Mr. Marcos, and asked President Rea-

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gan to make a personal request to Mr. Marcos to step down.

Some lawmakers said the Marcos regime has had almost no chance of survival since Mr. Marcos was declared the winner of a hotly contested and highly suspect Feb. 7 election.

"One of the things this administration does very well is implement their policy of democratic evolution or revolution, as the case may be," Sen. David Durenberger, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said yesterday in calling for Mr. Marcos' resignation.

"I think this administration has known all along that at some point in time, the unique ability of Ronald Reagan and his personal touch would be a decisive factor in bringing peace to the Philippines," he said.

Sen. Richard Lugar, the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee chairman who led the U.S. team that monitored the election, said the administration should encourage the Filipino leader to step down.

"President Marcos must come to the same conclusion our president

arrived at ... that given an election of fraudulent results, no legitimacy, it's difficult to see how this regime can continue," Mr. Lugar said. "He'll have to step down."

The two lawmakers echoed themes that were prevalent yesterday

on Capitol Hill: How can a free society, the leader of the free world, monitor an election, pronounce it fraudulent, and support the regime that perpetrated the fraud?

That question has been complicated because Mr. Marcos is an avid anti-communist who says he holds the key to keeping U.S. military bases, essential to the support of non-communist nations, in the Philippines.

The Reagan administration, despite the pressure from Congress to immediately halt aid to the government, had put off action until U.S. special envoy Philip C. Habib, returned to Washington yesterday.

But after consulting with Mr. Habib, the White House announced last night it would cut military aid if it seems that the aid would be used against the Filipino people.

It was unclear whether Mr. Marcos would be given asylum in the United States as troops loyal to Mr. Marcos five miles from the presidential palace began tear-gassing anti-Marcos forces, according to reports from Manila.

"The only ones who can possibly benefit from massive bloodshed and perhaps civil war are the communists, and the only way to prevent bloodshed and possibly civil war at the present time is for Mr. Marcos to step aside," said Rep. Stephen Solarz, the New York Democrat who chairs the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs.

Mr. Solarz believes asylum for Mr. Marcos should be given "only if he is going to step aside without plunging his country into a civil war," a Solarz aide said last night in a telephone interview.

But forces, such as Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, and others who voted against a Senate resolution condemning the Feb. 7 election, said Mr. Marcos should be given asylum because he has been fighting communist forces that helped opposition candidate Corazon Aquino.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee, which was waiting for Mr. Habib's return to vote on cutting off aid to the Marcos government, is expected to act quickly this week, and the measure is expected to fly through the House to the Senate, where there is a chance that it may be filibustered by conservatives.

Conservative forces in the House have all but abandoned Mr. Marcos because of reports of election fraud.

Even Rep. Gerald Solomon, the New York Republican who has avidly supported the Marcos government as "a bastion against communism," voted last week to cut off further aid to the regime.

The measure would place military aid in a trust fund and channel economic and humanitarian aid through charitable organizations such as the Roman Catholic Church.

Mr. Solarz, New York Democrat, said support for Mr. Marcos in Washington is "somewhere between nil and negligible."

Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn, ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee, urged Mr. Reagan to offer asylum to Mr. Marcos only "if he steps down peacefully and if he does so immediately and if he does so without bloodshed."

Sen. Larry Pressler, South Dakota Republican who serves on the Foreign Relations Committee, predicted bloodshed whether Mr. Marcos stepped down or not. "What comes after Marcos could be much worse," he said.